

VZCZCXRO2227  
PP RUEHPOD  
DE RUEHTI #0033 0150933  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 150933Z JAN 08  
FM AMEMBASSY TIRANA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6549  
INFO RUEHPS/USOFFICE PRISTINA PRIORITY 3728  
RUEHSQ/AMEMBASSY SKOPJE 4467  
RUEHVB/AMEMBASSY ZAGREB 3247  
RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE 3035  
RUEHVJ/AMEMBASSY SARAJEVO 0706  
RUEHPOD/AMEMBASSY PODGORICA 0059  
RUEHLJ/AMEMBASSY LJUBLJANA 0786  
RUEHHE/AMEMBASSY HELSINKI 0067  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 3509  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 2378

UNCLAS TIRANA 000033

SIPDIS

SIPDIS  
SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR EUR/SCE

E.O. 12958:N/A

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SUBJECT: PRESIDENT TOPI TO EMPHASIZE TOLERANCE IN JANUARY 25-27  
VISIT TO KOSOVO

[1](#)1. (SBU) Deputy Foreign Minister Edith Harxhi told us on January 11 of upcoming plans for President Topi to visit Kosovo January 25-27. Harxhi said he would travel with a delegation of some 90 people. This trip has now been released in the press, which reported the entourage could reach 100, to include business and cultural leaders and politicians.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Harxhi, who said she was planning and advancing the visit, suggested it would highlight tolerance. She said Topi would visit Gnjilane, which Harxhi described as "a center of multi-ethnicity," and deliver a message of support for respect and tolerance. She hopes to arrange for him to tour what she described as a well-known shopping bazaar. According to Harxhi, Serbians from Southern Serbia also come to the bazaar and sell local items, such as a particular cheese. She also expects Topi to visit a Catholic (vice Orthodox) church in a village near Gnjilane, where Mother Teresa was baptized. (She said several times that the goal is for Topi's visit to be different, not to repeat exactly what was done by PM Berisha or other Albanian leaders in previous trips.)

[1](#)3. (SBU) Harxhi also said President Topi would visit Camp Bondsteel to thank the soldiers for their support to Kosovo and the region. She said this had already been approved by USOP and by the Commander at Bondsteel.

[1](#)4. (SBU) President Topi has requested a meeting with Ambassador Withers prior to the January 25 trip.

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